



## **NEW MEMBER HANDBOOK**

*For Parents & Swimmers*



**T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore

**TOGETHER WE WIN!**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<a href="#">ABOUT MSJA</a>	1
<a href="#">CONGRATULATIONS YOU ARE A SWIM PARENT</a>	2
<a href="#">SWIMMING BENEFITS</a>	2
<a href="#">NUTRITION FOR SWIMMERS</a>	3
<a href="#">SWIM PARENTS 101</a>	5
<a href="#">A HEALTHY PARENT COACH RELATIONSHIP</a>	7
<a href="#">USA SWIM MEETS</a>	8
<a href="#">HOW TO ENTER A SWIM MEET</a>	10
<a href="#">A GUIDE TO YOUR FIRST SWIM MEET</a>	12
<a href="#">MSJA TEAM STRUCTURE</a>	14
<a href="#">MSJA PRACTICE SCHEDULES</a>	15
<a href="#">MSJA TEAM APPAREL AND EQUIPMENT</a>	16
<a href="#">MSJA MEMBERSHIP FEES AND PROCEDURES</a>	17
<a href="#">MSJA PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES</a>	20
<a href="#">COMMUNICATION...WE BUILD LIVES</a>	21

**W**elcome to the exciting world of USA Swimming and Mission San Jose Aquatics. Joining a new sport can be a confusing and somewhat frustrating time for a parent. We understand how you feel. Hopefully our **New Member Parent handbook** will educate you, and answer some of your questions, but please don't hesitate to ask an experienced parent or coaches for help. **Please be sure to also check out our 2010-2011 MSJA Team Handbook** online, where you will find information about our team accomplishments, coaching staff, handling Move-ups, legal entity and MSJA Awards. ***We're here to help you! Just ask!***

Debbie Potts	CEO/Head Coach	<b>Office</b> 510-657-6752	Cell 510-703-2986	<a href="mailto:swimfordeb@msn.com">swimfordeb@msn.com</a>
Izzy Real	COO/Head AG Coach	<b>Office</b> 510-657-6752	Cell 510-703-2830	<a href="mailto:izzyr@sbcglobal.net">izzyr@sbcglobal.net</a>

**A**sk an MSJA Parent... The following parents have volunteered to help you!

Jingli Sun	Email <a href="mailto:jinglisun@yahoo.com">jinglisun@yahoo.com</a>	Home Phone: 510-683-9605
Mette Graversen	Email <a href="mailto:m.graversen@comcast.net">m.graversen@comcast.net</a>	Home Phone: 510-440-8378
Felice Lightstone	Email <a href="mailto:fcflight@gmail.com">fcflight@gmail.com</a>	Home Phone: 510-979-1260
Lekie Kekoa	Email <a href="mailto:lexie.kekoa@avagotech.com">lexie.kekoa@avagotech.com</a>	Home Phone: 510-490-2675

**L**earn more about swimming!

<b>USA Swimming website</b>	<a href="http://www.usaswimming.org">www.usaswimming.org</a>
<b>Pacific Swimming website</b>	<a href="http://www.pacswim.org">www.pacswim.org</a>

MSJA New Member Handbook, By Debbie Potts, founding coach member of MSJA

## ABOUT MSJA

We are a community based USA swim team dedicated to providing swimmers of all abilities the opportunity to be "**the best that they can be.**" MSJA Swimmers range from age 5 to college level and we have nine distinct training groups. Since 1989, our home pool has been Ohlone College, in Fremont, California.

Mission San Jose Aquatics was established in 1989 as a competitive swimming program deeply rooted in the values of its founding coaching staff. These values include a love of aquatic sports, a belief that competitive swimming teaches transferable life-skills, and the understanding that a community is held together by its shared devotion to education and commitment to the success of youth.

Our goal is to produce an environment in which everyone can strive to realize the Olympic ideals of hard work, sportsmanship, competition and fitness. Ultimately swimmers will build self-confidence, self-discipline, integrity and courage that will last a lifetime."

Unlike many recreational and competitive sports, success in swimming truly requires a year-round commitment in order to develop skills, manifest physiological change, and master the competitive environment. This level of commitment requires that the swimmer make appropriate lifestyle choices, prioritize and effectively manage their time, and learn to make sacrifices. The sport of competitive swimming teaches young people the relationship between work and results, how to deal with success, set-backs and failures, and the complexities of working cooperatively with others and dealing with constructive criticism, demands, and discipline from an authority figure. All of these skills are highly transferable, and there is considerable evidence that swimmers enjoy more success academically, professionally, and interpersonally than participants in other youth-sport activities.

Our professional coaching staff works with each swimmer in a personal, informative and positive way. Our coaches blend unique stroke drills, age-appropriate training and fun into each practice. Their unique approach to swimming makes MSJA one of the premier swim teams in the country.

Some of our swimmers win gold medals. Some qualify for National Teams and/or All Star Teams. Some earn college scholarships. ***MSJA swimmers of all abilities can experience success*** by improving their technique, times, training habits, race strategies and time management skills. Swimmers win by dedicating and believing in themselves. Swimmers win by setting goals and striving to reach them.

Our year-round swimmers enjoy fun team socials, outings, travel opportunities, and competitions. Our swimmers often become life-long friends. Annually, we celebrate together at our Awards Banquet where we honor the success of each and every athlete.

Swimming is a wholesome, positive activity because no matter where you are in the swimming progression, the sport encompasses the fundamental elements that parents love. At USA Swimming, we believe that the core benefits of swimming include:

- Fun-whether it is the exhilaration of achieving your goal time or playing cards with your friends at a swim meet, we love this sport and stay involved because it is FUN.
- Fitness- swimming keeps its participants in incredible shape and teaches basic FITNESS principles that last a lifetime.
- Friends-ask any swimmer what they like most about the sport, more often than not it will be the friendships they made through car pools to practice, hanging out at the end of the lane, or pushing their buddies to try just a little bit harder at practice.

The enjoyment we experience away from the pool as well as the learning, training, success and fun we have in the pool is what makes our year-round team so special. **On behalf of our coaching staff, I would like to welcome you to the most comprehensive and exciting swim team available to area youngsters, Mission San Jose Aquatics.**

Sincerely,

***Debbie Potts***

CEO/Head Coach

## CONGRATULATIONS, YOU ARE A SWIM PARENT



*Pictured here with her dad, Ellie Monobe joined MSJA at age 12, and through hard work, she steadily climbed the ranks of USA Swimming...(from an "A" swimmer to a National Qualifier. In September, Ellie begins her senior year at CAL as team captain. Ellie will graduate in 2011 and hopes to coach college swimming.*

Parents contribute to the success experienced by the child and the team. Parents serve as role models and their children emulate their attitudes. Be aware of this and strive to be positive role models. Most importantly, show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents, other parents and teammates. Remember that you are teaching your child at all times.

While winning is nice and setting a record, getting a best time, or making a qualifying time feels good, we hope that our young athletes learn more than, "It is great to swim fast."

### THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS TO THE SPORT OF SWIMMING!

- Swimming can prevent drowning and is a sport you can do all your life, from 5 to 95 in USA Swimming and USA Masters Swimming.
- According to many doctors, Swimming is the ideal sport for developing proportional muscular development and skeletal growth.
- Swimming enhances children's natural flexibility by exercising all of their major joints through full range of motion.
- Swimming helps develop superior coordination because it requires combinations of complex movements of all parts of the body, enhancing harmonious muscle function, grace, and fluidity of movement.
- Swimming promotes fitness and teaches a child to strive for physical achievement. Many super-stars in other sports started out as swimmers and gained strength and coordination that helped them to excel.
- Swimming is an exciting individual and team sport.
- Swimming is a technical and specialized activity involving extensive skill development.
- Swimming is relatively injury free in comparison to other youth sports.
- Swimming teaches the life lessons of sport and sportsmanship which include learning to deal with winning and losing, as well as working with officials, teammates and coaches.
- Swimming motivates participants to strive for self improvement and teaches goal orientation.
- Swimming cultivates a positive mental attitude and high self-esteem.
- In addition to physical development, swimmers develop greater intellectual competence by learning and using swimming skills, to engage the thinking processes. As they learn new techniques, children must develop and plan movement sequences. They improve by exploring new ideas. They learn that greater progress results from using their creative talents. Self-expression can be just as much physical as intellectual. Finally, their accomplishments in learning and using new skills contribute to a stronger self image.

### ***DID YOU KNOW?***

**Drowning is a leading killer of American children.  
More than 30% of kids are at risk for obesity-related illnesses.  
Swimming is a cure.**



## NUTRITION FOR SWIMMERS

### FUELING YOUR STROKE (FROM USA SWIMMING)



Six 200's descending on five minutes. Twenty-five 50's on :45. Whatever your "favorite," every set during every workout and dryland session **requires energy**.

Nutrients are the "chemicals" that supply the body with energy. Carbohydrate, protein and fat supply energy in the form of calories. These are your "Energy-Yielding Nutrients." Vitamins, Minerals and Water don't supply energy in the form of calories, but their presence is required in order for the body to access the energy provided by carbohydrate, protein and fat.

During exercise, the body gets its energy primarily from carbohydrate and fat. It likes to save protein for other things (building and repairing muscle tissue, hormones and red blood cells, and supporting the immune system). The only time the body uses protein as an energy source during exercise is when carbohydrate and fat are not present in sufficient quantities. This happens when the total caloric intake is too low over a period of months, and/or the bout of exercise is so long that the body's accessible sources of carbohydrate and protein become exhausted. Neither of these scenarios is desirable for swimmers.

Think about money. When you have lots of it, you don't mind paying full price for things. But when money is scarce, or there is just too much you have to buy, you look for bargains. You're not being cheap, just thrifty. Simplified to some extent, your body knows how to shop.

Now instead of dollars, think of your currency as oxygen. When swimming is "easy," say during warm-up or your easiest sets, there is plenty of oxygen available to support the exercise. The body perceives itself as "rich" and doesn't mind splurging on fat (1 gram of fat costs 9 oxygens). In fact, it automatically does so because it knows it might need carbohydrate at a later time.

When exercise is hard (we're talking *tough* sets, definitely your *hardest* sets), oxygen is not plentiful. In fact, the body needs every bit it can get to support the exercise, but even *that* is often not enough, and the body is forced to derive energy in ways that do not require oxygen (i.e. *anaerobic* metabolism). In this situation, the body perceives itself as very "poor" and becomes very thrifty with its "purchase" of fuel. Since carbohydrate costs less than fat (1 gram of carbohydrate costs 4 oxygens), the body chooses to rely primarily **on carbohydrate for its energy**.

Keep in mind that this entire fuel burning process is never a case of "all or none." In other words, the body is always using some combination of carbohydrate and fat, but the **intensity** of the exercise dictates which fuel source will be the *dominant* one. When swimming is easiest, fat is the primary fuel source. When swimming is toughest, carbohydrate is the primary fuel source. When swimming is about 50% of maximum effort, carbohydrate and fat contribute about equally.

Let's face it – the majority of workouts are hard. Above 50% for certain! If you consider the typical swim workout, **it's pretty safe to say that the primary fuel source for swimmers is carbohydrate**.

## NUTRITION FOR SWIMMERS

### EAT COLORFUL FOODS (FROM USA SWIMMING)

What are the first three foods that come to mind when we say “carbohydrate?”

**1. Pasta**

**2. Rice**

**3. Bread**

Each of these is excellent. But what do they have in common? They're all white!



One of the most overlooked sources of carbohydrate is fruit. Yes, FRUIT. Fresh, canned, frozen, dried or juiced - No matter how you look at it, fruit is an excellent source of carbohydrate. Not only does fruit provide carbohydrate in the form of natural sugars (versus refined sugar), the bright colors of fruits indicate that they are also excellent sources of vitamins and minerals, including a sub-group called anti-oxidants.

You might recall that exercise is the stimulus that leads to training adaptations. And that adaptations to training occur ONLY if you give the body the right kinds of fuels during periods of rest.

Well, one of the side effects of exercise is the generation of “free radicals.” Free radicals are molecules that can actually cause damage to muscle tissue above and beyond the damage caused by exercise. The damage caused by exercise is normal. It serves as part of the stimulus for training adaptation to take place. But damage caused by free radicals is NOT a desired part of the training process. Damage caused by free radicals (aka “scavengers”) circulating in the bloodstream after workout can continue well into the recovery period. This is when the body is supposed to be adapting!

Anti-oxidants “absorb” free radicals, neutralizing their effect in the body before their damage to muscle tissue can amount to much. A diet consistently rich in fruits (and other colorful foods, such as VEGETABLES) is apt to keep the body consistently supplied with anti-oxidants, which will assist the body in keeping free radical formation to a minimum. This is a good reason to eat lots of colorful foods during the recovery time between workouts.

Colorful foods include, but are not limited to:

Apples, Strawberries, Blueberries, Bananas, Oranges, Kiwi, Watermelon, Raspberries, Grapes, Mango, Papaya, Apricots, Red peppers, Broccoli, Corn, Squash, Carrots, Peas, Green beans, Tomatoes

Colorful foods **DO NOT** include: Skittles, Jelly Beans, M&Ms, Mike & Ikes, Fruit Loops



### USA Swimming Nutrition Tracker Are you eating like a champion?

This Personal Nutrition Tracking System is designed to provide you with an opportunity to have your diet evaluated for energy and nutrient content. Use it to: look up a single food item to see what's in it; enter an entire day's food intake to see how much carbohydrate, protein, fat and calories you consumed; compare what you ate to your individual needs; enter a recipe to see a nutrient breakdown per serving; track your habits throughout the season and off-season and more.

- ★ Visit [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)
- ★ Click on Tips and training
- ★ Click on Nutrition Center
- ★ Click on learn more.
- ★ Create an account, sign in, and
- ★ Discover if you are eating like a champion.

## SWIM PARENTS 101

### THE FOUR STROKES

The four competitive swimming strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. The combination of all four strokes is called individual medley (IM).

In freestyle events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most commonly used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the surface of the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick.

Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.

The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.

Some consider the butterfly to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.

The individual medley, commonly referred to as the I.M., features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

### TRAINING FOR YOUNG SWIMMERS

Many parents have lots of questions about swim practice, especially when their children are new to the sport. It is sometimes difficult to know what to expect of your child. Your child may talk about swim practice, but you may not even understand the new "swimming vocabulary" your child is using.

Many children improve rapidly during the developmental stages due to growth and improved technique. It is difficult to resist the tendency to push young athletes at this stage. However, the emphasis should be placed **on technique** and not intense training. The training schedule for developmental swimmers should be flexible enough to provide them with enough time to participate in other activities. Since swimmers' careers can extend well into adulthood, swimming at the youngest levels needs to be fun, pressure free, and filled with learning experiences. This will ensure that swimming remains fun throughout their lives.

You should certainly ask questions at swim team parents' meetings or schedule an appointment with your child's coach to clarify things. However there are many common questions that might be answered in our FAQs. Read through the FAQs and see if you have found yourself asking these same questions.

### FAQ'S From Parents

**Q: *It looks like my child has too much fun, shouldn't she be working harder?***

**A:** Be happy that your child is having fun! According to a recent study conducted by USA Swimming children who experience fun while participating stay in sports longer (Tuffey, Gould, & Medbery, 1998). At this stage of the game, the most important aspect of development is the mastery of skills, which means learning to swim the strokes with proper technique. Fundamentals must be established prior to true "training" taking place. And, if she is having fun in the process of learning, she is more likely to continue to swim.

**Q: *Shouldn't my child be swimming more laps instead of doing all those drills?***

**A:** Your child needs to develop a solid foundation in stroke mechanics. Drills and drill sets serve the specific purpose of teaching skills and fundamentals. Drills develop motor coordination, motor skills, and balance. In fact, your child's coach may prescribe a particular drill, just for your child, in order to improve a part of her stroke. In addition, she may actually be experiencing a "training" benefit from drills. Drills require concentration and aerobic energy to do them correctly.

**Q: My son came home and said he had his best result on a test set of 100s on 1:45, what does that mean?**

**A:** Some coaches use test sets to measure improvement. This particular challenge set consists of swimming a certain number of 100s on every 1 minute and 45 seconds, which is the send off. Praise your child for this accomplishment. In addition to achieving the physical goal, your child is also learning to swim on an interval, read the pace clock, and accomplish practice goals. Congratulate him on his efforts and let him know you are proud of him

**Q: Some days he likes to just play with his friends. Should I force him to go to practice?**

**A:** You should not force your child; you want his participation to be his decision. Reinforce the choices and decisions he has made to start swimming. For example, your son chose to go to practice on Tuesday and Thursdays, on other days he has the freedom to do other activities. As a parent, explain your expectation that he fulfill the commitment he made by joining the team. You don't want to force your child into a sport that he does not enjoy, yet you want your child to be involved in a 'lifetime sport', to learn about making and keeping a commitment and to interact with peers. So, what are you to do? Instead of allowing your child to make a daily decision about going to practice, allow him to decide whether or not he wants to swim for the season. Once the decision is made to swim, he is making a commitment to the team and needs to follow through on it by attending practice on a regular basis. A haphazard schedule is detrimental to the swimmer's overall development. Interestingly, when asked to reflect on the role of their parents in their swimming, athletes from the World Championship team talked about being pushed to swim by their parents on a weekly basis but knowing they could quit if they stopped having fun with swimming.

**Q: What will happen to my child's meet results if he only makes half of the offered workouts because he is participating in other sports?**

**A:** Children involved in other activities can benefit in the areas of coordination and balance, as well as improved social and intellectual development. Specialized training in one activity does not necessarily need to take place at this stage of development. Will your son's teammate who makes all practices have better results? The answer is: Probably, because his teammate is working solely on developing swimming skills. It is up to you to explain to your child that making the choice to participate in other activities can have its consequences. Tell your son that he should not compare his results to that of his teammate, but to focus on the fact that he is benefiting from and enjoying both sports.

**Q: My child seems to be bouncing off the wall during "taper." What is that?**

**A:** Tapering is a gradual reduction in training workloads in preparation for major competition. Some Age Groupers do not need to taper at all: a little rest and they are ready to go. As training increases, swimmers need more rest and the process of tapering is introduced. Swimmers taper only a couple of times a year, for their major competitions. Taper is not something that occurs for every meet! "Taper time" is an exciting time for a young swimmer and there are two reasons for this: - Physiologically your child is expending less energy because the workload has been reduced. - Psychologically there is less mental fatigue as he is doing less physical work. Additionally, the anticipation and nervousness associated with the upcoming competition contributes to your child's bouncing off the wall. Do not worry, it will soon be over.

## **KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AS A SWIM PARENT**

While winning is nice, while setting a record, getting a best time, or making a qualifying time feels good, we hope that our young athletes learn more than, "It is great to swim fast." Nowhere in human history or theology do we learn that the ability to swim fast holds a very high priority in the grand scheme of the universe. From a practical standpoint, over-emphasis on speed, times and achievements will eventually end in frustration. No matter how fast a young athlete swims, there will probably be another swimmer in the next town, state, or country, swimming faster, if not now, then next month. So as coaches and parents, ask yourselves:

- Did the child learn to swim with more skill this past season so he or she is both stronger and safer in the water?
- Did the child learn to exhibit initiative, wanting to come to the pool and do the practice without having to be constantly pushed or prodded by parents and coaches?
- Did the child learn something about unselfishness, sacrificing his or her personal wants for the good of others or the team?
- Did the child benefit from the competitive experience, learning how to handle winning and losing in our competitive society?
- Did the child learn more patience in overcoming obstacles, setbacks and problems?
- Did the child learn empathy?

***In a few years, the medals and ribbons will be laid aside and best times will be a hazy memory. The friendships that will develop and the life skills learned will carry on for a lifetime.***



## A HEALTHY PARENT-COACH RELATIONSHIP



A key component to an athlete's healthy swimming experience is the building of a positive relationship between a parent and a coach. Both the parent and the coach have important roles in supporting a swimmer. A coach is there to teach and judge a swimmer's performance and technique while a parent should love and support the child regardless of the outcome. It's helpful for a parent to realize some key things about a coach.

A lot more comes with coaching than the athletes, practice and competition. Beyond the initial hours at the pool, a coach's time is spent planning for workouts, understanding the long term-term nature of the sport and each individual swimmer's performance, doing several key administrative duties and providing emotional support for many athletes.

Ultimately a coach loves the sport and is willing to make countless sacrifices to foster swimming and its athletes in and out of the pool. Keeping this in mind, there are key things parents can do to support their child's coach and ultimately help their child achieve swimming success.

### HOW A PARENT CAN HELP

- Trust and listen to the coach
- Respect and support their decisions
- Be there to support your child and not add additional pressure

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I NEED TO TALK TO THE COACH?

Please wait until practice is over to talk to the coaches, or feel free to Email or call. During practice, they are trying to concentrate on working with the swimmers. You might try talking to other parents– they may know the answer to your question. If every parent spends time asking the coaches questions, or making suggestions, there wouldn't be enough time to “coach swimmers”.

### WHAT TO DO IF PROBLEMS WITH THE COACH OCCUR?

**One of the** traditional swim team communication gaps is that some parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but in fact this approach often results in new problems being created. Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

1. Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
2. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a training group that can range in size from 20-200 members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short term inconvenience.
3. If your child swims for an assistant coach, always discuss the matter first with that coach, following the same guidelines and preconceptions noted above. If the assistant coach cannot satisfactorily resolve your concern, then ask that the Head Age Group coach or Head Coach to join the dialogue as a third party.
4. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

**VISIT OUR TEAM HANDBOOK (FOR ALL MEMBERS, NEW & RETURNING) ONLINE AT [SWIMMSJA.NET](http://SWIMMSJA.NET) TO READ OUR COACHES' PROFILES**

## USA SWIM MEETS

### RULES

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

### COURSE

Competition pools may be short course (25 yards, 25 meters), or long course (50 meters). The international standard (as used in the Olympics) is 50 meters. World records are accomplished in 25 and 50 meter pools. USA Swimming maintains records for 25 yard, 25 meter and 50 meter pools.

### COMPETITION

Participants compete in different age groups and meets depending on their achievement level and how old they are on the first day of the meet. Traditionally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Many local meets feature 8 and under, single age groups, or senior events. Team practice groups are usually determined by age and/or ability.

### LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT



There are seven different age group classifications recognized by USA Swimming (the governing body of the sport; the: 8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Senior. The senior classification includes any age registered swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmers age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet. Within each age-group there are different recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as "C" swimmers. As they improve, they advance from "C", to "B", "A", "JO" (Junior Olympic), "Q" (Far Western Qualifier), "PRT" (Pacific Reportable Top 10) and "NRT" (National Reportable Top 10). The times required for each ability level are published each year and can be found on the Pacific Swimming website at [pacswim.org](http://pacswim.org). In some cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. An example: a "C" breaststroke time, a "B" freestyle time, and a JO (Junior Olympic) Backstroke time. Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the

qualifying time for that particular classification. There are also standards for senior swimmers, such as Senior Trial and final times, USA Sectional Qualifying times, Jr. National and National Qualifying times, and Olympic Trials. **MSJA has had swimmers start as C swimmers, and over the course of 7-8 years, reach Olympic Trials.**

### OFFICIALS

Officials are present at all competitions to enforce the technical rules of swimming so the competition is fair and equitable. Officials attend clinics, pass a written test and work meets before being certified. All parents are encouraged to get involved with some form of officiating.

### COMPETITIVE OPPORTUNITIES



### AGE GROUP SWIMMING

One of the benefits of your USA Swimming membership is the privilege of being able to compete in swim meets across the country. When you're first starting out, though, you will probably participate in competitions a little closer to home.

There are many different kinds of meets you can participate in, but most age groupers will probably be competing in local Invitational Swim Meets, which are usually held over the weekend and hosted by a nearby club – maybe even your own.

There are typically anywhere between 150 and 1,000 swimmers competing at these Invitational Meets. That's a lot of people, but there's no reason to be scared. Your coach will be there with you to make sure you survive the experience, and your parents will probably be there to cheer you on.

With so many swimmers competing, some will be very fast, and some will be beginners like you. Don't be nervous. These meets are set up so that you are racing against kids your own age and pretty close to the same ability.

At most meets, you'll have the opportunity to win awards like ribbons or medals. But if you don't win right away, don't give up.

Remember, some of the USA's top swimmers like Michael Phelps and Natalie Coughlin started out swimming at these local Invitational's just like you, and they probably didn't win their first races, either. The great thing about swimming is that you're competing against yourself more than against anyone else. As long as you keep improving your swimming skills, you're getting better, and maybe someday it will be you standing on top of the medals podium.

## THE BIG MEETS: JO'S, FAR WESTERNS, SECTIONALS, NATIONALS

As you get better, you might get good enough to compete at bigger meets with lots of other fast swimmers.

All these bigger meets have time standards or "cuts." That means you will have to swim a certain time in your event before you will be allowed to compete in these meets. The bigger and more important the meet, the faster you will have to swim.

The first big meets you might compete in the Junior Olympic age group championships, and Far Westerns. At these meets, you will still be competing against swimmers in your own age group, but they will be some of the best in our state and geographic area – Pacific Swimming. It's easy to get nervous, but keep in mind, if you weren't fast enough, you wouldn't be able to compete at this level.

## COMPETITIVE OPPORTUNITIES: SENIOR SWIMMING

Senior swimming requires more commitment and dedication to the sport. This step up usually occurs around the time a swimmer is 13 or 14, but may come earlier or later, depending on the club and the individual swimmer.

At this point, a swimmer has pretty much decided to make swimming his sole athletic focus. Practices and competitions become a little more serious, and if a swimmer is fast enough, a whole new level of competitive opportunities arise, including the Speedo Champions Series, USA Swimming Grand Prix meets, the NSCA Junior Nationals, the Speedo Junior National Championships, the ConocoPhillips USA Swimming National Championships, and Olympic Trials.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS READY TO SWIM A MEET AND WHAT MEETS SHOULD SHE ATTEND?

The MSJA Meet Schedule is on our website at [www.swimmsja.net](http://www.swimmsja.net). Click on the "schedules tab" and then the Meet Schedule. There you will find the dates and meets we are attending as a team. Before you enter a meet, talk to your child's coach. Ask what meets your child should attend and what events he/she is ready to swim. Most likely, your child will attend swim meets where we have indicated that "Age-Group", or "ALL" are attending the meet. The class of the meet, will most likely be "C-B-A", "C/B", "Invitational", or "dual meet". These meets are appropriate for new competitors.

## TYPES OF MEETS

**Dual Meets:** Sometimes, MSJA will compete with one other team in a Dual Meet, or two other teams in a Tri Meet. These meets help promote team unity. Since there are not time standards, for these meets, every swimmer, no matter what their level, may compete. In the summer months, any MSJA swimmer who wishes to compete in the South Bay Swim League Championships, must enter a dual meet to qualify for the Championships, which are open to all levels of competitor.

**C Meets:** These meets do not have any qualification time standards. Most of the time these meets offer each one of the competitive strokes in the two distances offered for each group. Each swimmer is usually allowed to enter from 3-5 events per day.

**Qualification Meets:** These meets have some type of qualification time standard(s) that a swimmer must meet in order to enter the meet. Examples are B meets (where the swimmer must have met the minimum entry time – which are B times). **You can find a list of standards on the Pacific Swimming website at [pacswwim.org](http://pacswwim.org)**

## HOW TO ENTER A SWIM MEET

Enter meets that are on the MSJA meet Schedule – these are the meets MSJA coaches have scheduled and best fit your swimmers long term training plan. Enter the meet as early as possible. Generally the deadline for entries into a meet is about 10 days before the meet, but **it may be advisable** to get your entries in much sooner than this, especially in cases where the meet has an entry cap (a limit on entries) and is expected to fill up. Again, talk to your coach for details and advice.

Most meets offer you the option of entering the meet **online** or **by mail**.

When you complete the online or hard-copy entry form (by mail), be sure to enter your name and **USA Swimming ID registration number just as they appear on your current USA Swimming registration card**. USA registration ID's are determined as follows: (birthdate, with preceding zero's for months and days with single digits, first 3 letters of your first name, middle initial, and first four letters of your last name. Where there are blank spaces, insert an asterisk.) For LSC, write **PC**. PC stands for Pacific Swimming which is our local swimming committee (LSC). For Team Code, write **MSJA**

Be sure to enter only individual events for which you qualify (your coach will enter relays). For example, in a B/C meet you may not enter events in which you have equaled or bettered an A time. Also as an example, in an A+ meet you may only enter events in which you have achieved an A time or better. Enter your best time for each event. **When in doubt, ask your coach.**

**To enter the meet online**, go to <https://ome.swimconnection.com>. Find the meet you are trying to enter. Follow the online instructions. Entering a meet online allows you to receive immediate confirmation of your entry into the meet. The online entry web site will also tell you if the meet has reached its entry cap and is no longer accepting entries. Please note that online entry services normally charge a small processing fee for the use of their service in addition to the entry fee you are required to pay to enter the meet. The use of online entry services is voluntary and in no way required or expected of a swimmer. If you enter a meet online, you should print out a copy of the confirmation e-mail that you receive from the online entry service provider and bring it with you to the meet.

### MSJA's National Qualifier

Salena Huang with Olympic Champion Ryan Lochte





Sample:

Name  
Sammy Made Swimmer  
Date of Birth 11/01/2002

SAMMS Consolidated Entry Card																	
Name: Last Sammy								First Swimmer						Initial M			
Club Abbr MSJA		If unatt, swim club				Club Name Mission San Jose Aquatics											
Age 8		Date of Birth 11/01/02						Amount Paid \$16.00									
USS Reg Number		1	1	1	0	1	0	2	S	A	M	M	S	W	I	M	
Sex		M		F		Age Group		8-UN									
Event No.		Distance/Stroke								Entry Time							
6		25 YARD FREE								22:39							
16		25 YARD FLY								25.17							
26		50 YARD BACK								57.56							
34		25 BREAST								32.50							

## A GUIDE TO YOUR FIRST SWIM MEET

Swim meets are a great family experience. They're a place where the whole family can spend time together.

Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could. If you have any questions, please ask your coach.

### PACKING FOR THE MEET

#### Your swim bag should contain:

- Team suit, Team cap, Goggles, and if possible a spare of all of these items. You never know when something might rip or break.
- Deck sandals, towels (bring one towel per event), warm clothing (dress in layers), sunscreen, lip balm, A black sharpie for marking events on swimmers hand, baby powder for dusting swim caps, shampoo/conditioner, brush/comb, toiletries, deck of cards, electronic hand held games, mp3 players, etc.
- Pack a cooler and/or bring money for the snack bar. Load your cooler with plenty of water (even though swimmers are immersed in water, they dehydrate easily!),
- Pack nutritious food such bananas, sandwiches, peanut butter and apples, Greek yogurt w/blueberries and cereal, bagels and light cream cheese, pasta salad with lean chicken breast and/or beans, multi-grain crackers or pretzels w/string cheese, homemade trail mix (chex cereal, cheerios, pretzels, raisins, dried cranberries, peanuts, cashews), Graham crackers w/peanut butter, Hummus w/crackers or pita bread, Yogurt w/Kashi or Grapenuts & banana
- Inhalers, allergy medicine, and any other type of medicine your child may need. Different environments have different triggers that can set off an attack.
- Other Helpful items: Blankets, ground tarp or blanket, EZ-up, sleeping bag, chairs (parents need to be comfortable too). ***Once you attend your first couple of meets, you will be a pro at packing.***

### BEFORE THE MEET STARTS

1. Arrive at the pool **at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins**. This time will be listed in the meet sheet. Typically meets start at 9:00AM and members arrive by 7:30AM.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
3. Find the Clerk Of the Course and check-in. Check for special posted instructions in the check-in area.
  - Usually one will need to highlight the swimmer's name and circle the events they entered that day. If this is not done, the swimmer will not be allowed to swim that event. If you are attending the meet on both Saturday and Sunday, you will need to check in each day. Check-in is required so that the people running the meet know who is actually at the meet. After check-in, the meet administrators "seed" the swimmers into heats. Heat and lane assignments will be posted, so be sure your swimmer knows where to look! Once "checked in", write or have the swimmers write each event-number on his or her hand in ink. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen or watch for.
4. Then, make sure your swimmer checks in with his or her coach!
5. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
6. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until his first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, has a nutritious snack, or just gets settled in.
7. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
8. Psyche Sheet or Heat Sheets. A psyche sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer enters his/her previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in each event they enter. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A Heat sheet will be posted close to the start of the event, that lists the actual heat and lane your swimmer will be competing in.

## THE MEET STARTS

1. It is important for swimmers to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, why they should have the numbers on their hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.
2. Most meets are computerized. Heats and Lane assignments are posted for each event number. Typically girls are odd number events and boys are even number events. Locate the heat and lane assignment posting location. Any experienced swimmer will be glad to help you. Just ask!
3. Once the swimmer has their heat and lane assignment, he/she reports to their coach for some racing advice.
4. The swimmer swims his or her race.
5. After each swim:
  - o He/she is to ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time, and/or look at the scoreboard.
  - o Depending on instructions from the coach, the swimmer may be asked to do some recovery swimming if a "warm down" pool or lanes are available.
  - o The swimmer should then go immediately to his or her coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer. Some coaches may wish to talk with the swimmer before her recovery swim.
6. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
  - o Positive comments or praise
  - o Suggestions for improvement
  - o Positive comments
7. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:
  - o Tell him how great he did! The coach will be sure to discuss technique and the execution of their overall racing plan. You need to tell him how proud you are and what a great job he did.
  - o Take him back to the team area and relax. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat. It's also a good time for swimmers to hang out with their friends, play a game of cards, share snacks, and relax. It's also a good time for "new parents" to meet other parents, both new and experienced.
8. The swimmer now waits until his next event is called and starts the procedure again. When a swimmer has completed all of her events she and her parents get to go home. Make sure, however, that if there are relays included in the meet, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and she is not there.
9. Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility. Awards are typically given to first through 8<sup>th</sup> place finisher and are picked up at the meet. Sometimes, awards are gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time.

## JOIN SWIMCONNECTION!

Log into [www.swimconnection.com](http://www.swimconnection.com), and follow the instructions on how to become a member. This is a great way to keep track of your child's best swim times, which you will need each time you enter a meet. You will be able to maintain a history of their times, which is great for watching their progress. You and your swimmer will be shown the next swimming level to achieve. For example, the swimmers best time for each event he/she has swum will be displayed, and next to that time, will be the time standard for the next higher level of competition.

## MSJA TEAM STRUCTURE

MSJA offers a "progressive" age group program designed to develop each swimmer physically and emotionally. On the beginning levels, technique is the top priority and as the swimmer matures, more emphasis is placed on training. The following describes our training groups:

### Age Group Coaches Gene Kendall (4:30-5:30) and Chris Coble (5:30-6:30)

Our Age Group Training programs are designed for Swimmers ages 6-13, who have mastered the basics of freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. These groups are offered four practices per week, ranging from 45 minutes to 75 minutes in length, depending on group. Daily training emphasis is placed on improving competitive swimming skills. This includes: Streamlining, Learning proper body positions, Sculling drills that are designed to enhance over all feel for the water; Sets aimed at developing a strong efficient kick for each stroke, Drills and technical training designed to develop and refine each of the four competitive strokes; In addition, starts, turns, and finishes are part of the "Age-Groupers" training regimen. Swimmers in these groups are also introduced to age-appropriate training that includes aerobic and anaerobic. Training games are used within the weekly training cycle, as a reward for hard work, for team building, and for FUN! To meet the needs of our families, starting Fall 2010, we have added an Age-Group 2 "Late". **So now, families may select the 4:30-5:30PM group or the 5:30-6:30PM group. Also Note: in the Fall and Spring, these groups will be offered out of the water games, exercises, and/or swim DVD's, as additional training before or after practice, as determine by the coach, adding 15 minutes to their training schedule. Please check the monthly calendars for these special events.**

Age Group 1 (AG 1)	Ages 6-8	90% Technique, 10% Games
Age Group 2 (AG 2)	Ages 7-10	50% Technique, 40% training, 10% Games

### Junior Group : Coach Erin Morgan

Workouts are designed to challenge swimmers in both technique and training. Swimmers are introduced to test sets, goal setting, and a specific training cycle that challenges them in the areas of technique, endurance and speed. Swimmers are preparing for local competition. Junior Group swimmers are generally offered five 90 minute practices per week.

### Elite Group: Coaches Izzy Real and Erin Morgan

The top level of our age group program, our Elite group is for skilled and experienced age group swimmers, ages 9-14 who understand the concept that practice attendance and practice performance contribute directly to swim meet success. Stroke technique and age-appropriate cycle training prepare this group for local, regional and national competition. Swimmers compete at required meets with the goal of achieving "Junior Olympic" through "Sectional" Time Standards. Group emphasis is on the setting and achievement of athlete's individual goals. Younger and less experienced members begin in "Elite Silver" and as they mature advance to "Elite Gold", and then to Elite Pre-Senior.

### Varsity Group: (New for the 2010-2011 swim season) MSJA Coach assigned per quarter

This group is designed for the multi-sport high school swimmer who is preparing to excel in high school swimming and at local USA swim meets. High School Swimming is becoming increasingly faster, and the swimmers that take advantage of off-season practices are better prepared to succeed in the spring. Training emphasis is on technique, aerobic development, and race preparation. Swimmers are instructed in each of the four competitive strokes, and starts, turns and finishes, in a positive, friendly atmosphere, emphasizing drills, technique, and speed sets... the key to the success of high school swimmers. This is the only group within our team structure, who will be accepted on a 3 month basis: September-November; December to February, and mid May to mid August. Swimmers will be offered 5-6 practices per week.

### Senior and National Group: Coach Debbie Potts

This group is designed for committed, skilled and experienced, "Q level" swimmers, ages 13 and up. By the time swimmers reach the senior level, they should have developed a basic understanding of the attributes required for peak performance. Senior swimmers are required to commit to 80% (minimum) of all practices. A systematic, progressive, seasonal training plan helps to prepare swimmers in this group for local and regional competitions. Swimmers are split into Senior 1 and Senior 2. The major difference between Senior 1 and Senior 2 is the number of practices offered. Senior 1 is typically 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls and 9<sup>th</sup> grade boys, or swimmers being introduced to senior level training. These swimmers start with 7 workouts per week, which include one school week morning, Saturday morning and 5 evening practices. As the swimmer matures, he/she is advanced to Senior 2 and eight workouts per week. Those who meet the attendance requirements (80%) and appropriate qualifying standards will be invited to attend travel meets. **The National Training Group** represents the highest level within the MSJA team structure, and is designed for swimmers who accept a "no limit", "whatever it takes" philosophy. Athletes who possess the necessary desire, talent, skill, and dedication are provided with a specialized program to successfully compete at the state, national and International level of our sport. Swimmers in the National Group are offered 9 practices per week. Swimmers learn about persistence and patience as they tackle yearly, seasonal, monthly and daily training plans.



## MSJA PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Included are two "TYPICAL" Practice schedules, one for the "school year" and one for the "summer". Schedules are subject to change due to the following: Conflicts in college swimming and water polo schedules, pool break-downs, weather, space availability, **Holiday Training/Challenge Schedules**, Special Clinics Offered, travel meets, taper schedule and any other situations that may cause us to change times or locations.

Group calendars are posted monthly on our website at [swimmsja.net](http://swimmsja.net). Click on the SCHEDULES Tab, and you will find Monthly Calendars for every group. Check your monthly schedules for reminders, events and practice times

### School year Practice Schedule

Group	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
<b>SA Pre Comp *</b>	See Below*	See Below*	See Below*	See Below*		
<b>Age Group 1</b>	4:00-4:45PM	4:00-4:45PM	4:00-4:45PM	4:00-4:45PM	No practice	No Practice
<b>Age Group 2**</b>	4:30-5:30PM 5:30-6:30PM	4:30-5:30PM 5:30-6:30PM	4:30-5:30PM 5:30-6:30PM	4:30-5:30PM 5:30-6:30PM	No practice	No Practice
<b>Junior /Varsity Year round group</b>	5:30-7:00PM	5:30-7:00PM	5:30-7:00PM	5:30-7:00PM	4:00-5:30PM	No Practice
<b>Elite Silver/ Gold</b>	4:00-5:30PM	4:00-5:30PM	4:00-5:30PM	4:00-5:30PM	4:00-5:30PM	No Practice
<b>Elite Platinum</b>	4:00-6:00PM	4:00-6:00PM	4:00-5:30PM	4:00-6:00PM	4:00-5:30PM	As Scheduled
<b>Varsity***</b>	5:30-7:00PM	5:30-7:00PM	5:30-7:00PM	5:30-7:00PM	4:00-5:30PM	No Practice
<b>Senior</b>	5:00-6:30AM 3:45-6:30PM	3:45-6:30PM	4:00-6:00PM	3:45-6:30PM	5:00-6:30AM 4:00-6:00PM	7:00-9:30AM
<b>National</b>	5:00-6:30AM 3:45-6:30PM	3:45-6:30PM	5:00-6:30AM 4:00-6:00PM	3:45-6:30PM	5:00-6:30AM 4:00-6:00PM	7:00-10:00AM

### \*SwimAmerica™ Pre-Competitive Classes offered 2 days a week

**Mon. and Wed. Pre-Comp offered: #6: 5-5:30PM; #7: 5:30-6:00PM; #8: 6:00-6:30PM**

**Tues & Thurs. Pre-Comp offered: #7: 6:00-6:30PM; #8: 6:30-7:00PM; #9-10: 6:30-7:00PM**

**\*\* Beginning September, 2010, Age-Group 2 has two practice times to choose from. Note: in the Fall and Spring, these groups will be offered out of the water games, exercises, and/or swim DVD's, as additional training before or after practice, as determine by the coach, adding 15 minutes to their training schedule. Please check the monthly calendars for these special events.**

**\*\*\*Varsity Group debuts Sept., 2010. This is a 3-Quarter Group: Sep-Nov; Dec-Feb; Mid May-Mid August**

### Summer Practice Schedule

Group	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
<b>Age Group 1</b>	4:15-5:15PM	4:15-5:15PM	4:15-5:15PM	4:15-5:15PM	No Practice	No Practice
<b>Age Group 2</b>	5:00-6:00PM	5:00-6:00PM	5:00-6:00PM	5:00-6:00PM	No Practice	No Practice
<b>Junior 1/Junior 2</b>	4:30-6:30PM	4:30-6:30PM	4:30-6:30PM	4:30-6:30PM	No Practice	As Scheduled
<b>Varsity Group</b>	4:30-6:30PM	4:30-6:30PM	4:30-6:30PM	4:30-6:30PM	No Practice	No Practice
<b>Elite "B"</b> Mostly A swimmers	4:30-6:30PM	7:00-9:00AM	4:30-6:30PM	7:00-9:00AM	8:00-10:00AM Long Course	No Practice
<b>Elite "A"</b>	6:45-9:00AM Long Course	6:45-9:00AM Short Course	6:45-9:00AM Long Course	6:45-9:00AM Short Course	8:00-10:00AM Long Course	As Scheduled Long Course
<b>SENIOR</b>	7:30-10:00AM	7:00-10:00AM	7:30-10:00AM	7:00-10:00AM	7:30-10:00AM	7:30-10:00AM
<b>NATIONAL</b>	7:30-10:00AM 2:30-4:00PM	7:00-10:00AM	7:30-10:00AM 2:30-4:00PM	7:00-10:00AM	7:30-10:00AM 2:30-4:00PM	7:30-10:30AM

## **MSJA TEAM APPAREL AND EQUIPMENT**

### **What Apparel does my child need?**

- Team Cap and Team Suit to identify with the team, and stand out on the blocks, making it easy for coaches to find you.
- Racing goggles (with a permanent marker, write your child's name on the strap)
- Practice suit... Having a practice suit to use at practice, rather than the team suit will prolong the life of your team suit. Always rinse suits in tap water after being in the pool to get rid of damaging chlorine. You should not put your suits in the washing machine, but can wash them by hand with a mild liquid detergent.
- Practice caps and goggles
- Team Gear such as shirts, sweats, and backpack and a parka are recommended

### **What Training Equipment does my child need? [listed by group]**

- **AGE-GROUP I, II, and III:** Board and Fins (Net bag Suggested)
- **JUNIOR GROUP:** Board, Fins, Buoy, Paddles, Net Bag
- **ELITE SILVER/GOLD and PLATINUM:** Board, Fins, Swimmer Snorkel, Buoy, Paddles, Net Bag
- **VARSITY:** Board, Fins, Hans Paddles, StrokeMakers, Net bag (*a new group starting 09/10*)
- **SENIOR/NATIONAL:** Board, Long Fins, Short fins, Snorkel, Sculling Paddles, Hans Paddles, Stroke Makers, Yoga Mat, Breast fins optional

### **Why do I need to write my swimmer's name in everything?**

You might think your child will recognize his or her own stuff, but Team shirts and suits all look alike, and the only way to identify who it belongs to, is by looking for a name. Goggles, caps, and fins often get laid on the pool deck during practice and at the end of practice. Swimmers can only tell which ones are theirs if their name is on it.

### **Where can I purchase/order Team Apparel and Equipment?**

Visit our website at [www.swimmsja.net](http://www.swimmsja.net) to download a **team equipment order form** and an **MSJA Apparel Catalog and order form**. Fill out your request and submit it to Coach Debbie or Coach Izzy. They will do their best to fill your order in a timely fashion.



## MSJA MEMBERSHIP FEES AND PROCEDURES

### Joining MSJA

To join MSJA, each family must complete and turn in to the Registrar the following:

1. MSJA membership agreement and Emergency/Waiver form (Signature and initials everywhere required)
2. USA registration payment
3. First month and August dues are required upon registration. Once you have completed your first month of training, August dues are non-refundable.

### Financial Obligations

1. Annual USA Registration fee: \$60.00 per swimmer, plus Annual MSJA membership fee of \$60 for families with one swimmer; Add \$15 per each additional swimmer. (Includes T-shirt, cap, and relay fees)
2. MSJA Fundraising Obligation: Families with one swimmer have a \$300 fundraising obligation and families with two or more swimmers have a \$350 fundraising obligation.
3. Monthly Dues:
  - Monthly dues are payable for all months except August which is pre-paid. Dues are based on the Practice Group that your swimmer(s) participates in.
  - Please note that attendance at one practice during the month obligates you to pay full dues for that month.
  - In order to reduce administrative expenses, MSJA does not mail bills to families for regular dues. Bills are E-mailed on the 21<sup>st</sup> of each month for the next month's dues. Balances can be viewed on the website in **your account**.
  - If paying by check, monthly dues are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month and should be paid no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Payment received later than the 21<sup>st</sup> will be assessed a \$15 late charge.
4. For families with more than one swimmer, the swimmer in the highest paying swim group will be charged their full training fee, while the next sibling will be charged a reduced monthly fee. Any and all other siblings shall be charged \$65 each per month. Family Monthly fees are as follows:

GROUPS	1 <sup>st</sup> SWIMMER	2 <sup>nd</sup> SWIMMER	3 <sup>RD</sup> SWIMMER
National Group	\$145	\$65	\$65
Senior	\$140	\$65	\$65
Elite	\$130	\$65	\$65
Junior & Varsity Year Round	\$130	\$65	\$65
Age Group 2	\$120	\$65	\$65
Age Group 1	\$115	\$65	\$65
<b>New: SEASONAL GROUPS</b>			
SwimAmerica Pre-Comp	\$85	\$75	
Varsity	\$390/Quarter	\$300/Quarter	
College	\$200	\$200	

**Seasonal groups** are responsible for training fees only and USA Swimming registration fees of \$60 per year. The Varsity Group runs Sept-Nov; Dec-Feb; Mid May through Mid August. SwimAmerica PreComp is offered September-November and March – August. College Swimmers may train anytime they are home.

## **MSJA MEMBERSHIP FEES AND PROCEDURES CONTINUED**

### **5. Billing Policy**

- ◆ At the beginning of each season, returning members will be billed on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August. On September 1<sup>st</sup>, members will be charged, September's dues, August of the next year's dues, and the annual family membership fee. All initial (first month and August) payments may be made by check or credit card. Make check payable to MSJA and mailed to the MSJA P.O. Box 3079, Fremont, CA 94539. Creditcard payments may be made through the TeamUnify Billing System using your distinct account and password number. All payments must be posted before midnight the 21<sup>st</sup> of each month or an automatic \$15 late fee will be assessed.

### **6. USA Registration is billed on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, and due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December**

## **Special Fund-Raisers and Assessments**

- ◆ In order to meet the clubs expenses it may be necessary for the MSJA Board of Directors to organize a general membership fund-raising activity or assess each family. In the event that such a fund-raiser is required, all families are required to participate and all proceeds from the general membership fund-raiser will go towards the club's general funds. No individual credit will be allowed for these activities.
- ◆ To assist our members in meeting their family obligation fundraising commitments to the club, MSJA provides some revenue-generating programs to help offset the \$300 (and \$350 for families with multiple swimmers) annual fundraising obligation. Membership will be notified of fundraising activities.

## **What is my Password and How do I pay Monthly Dues?**

You are emailed a password upon joining. To access your account, log into [www.swimmsja.net](http://www.swimmsja.net) and enter your password. Once you are into your account, you may change your password to something easy for you to remember. You will be emailed directions on how to make automatic payments on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month by using Mastercard, Visa, or Debit Cards. If at any time, your credit card is declined, you must update your credit card information, and make a manual check payment no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month. Monthly dues may also be manually paid by check, but must be received no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, and should be mailed to: MSJA; PO BOX 3079, Fremont, CA 94539

Bills are E-mailed on the 21<sup>st</sup> of each month for the next month's dues. Balances can be viewed on the website in **your account**.



## **MSJA PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

On MSJA, parental commitment and involvement is essential. The following recommendations require little effort but pay high dividends in terms of your family's level of satisfaction.

1. Select a "volunteer job" that you can feel good about doing and commit to serve throughout the swim year on a committee. As a parent volunteer, you will be actively involved in the program, and will be instrumental in strengthening our swim team. With a positive attitude and a willingness to lend a hand, you will also have great impact on your child's athletic environment, and his/her love of swimming. If you want to encourage your child to stay with the sport, let your child see that you enjoy volunteering for their club. Each family is obligated to work 15 hours per swim season.
2. Parents are expected to share in 'timing' at meets by being available to time at all of the meets in which your swimmer is entered.
3. Read all communications such as MSJA SwimParents, MSJA Newsletters and any pertinent information that is distributed.
4. Ask questions. Members of the staff and Booster Club are ready to help you, so please call on them as needed. Please remember that during practice, the coaches' attention is focused on their swimmers. Please refrain from interrupting practice. You may schedule an appointment with a specific coach or wait until after practice.
5. Pay attention to your financial and fund-raising obligations. MSJA is a self-funding organization and requires an annual commitment from its membership.
6. Promptly pick up your swimmer after practice. Fifteen minutes after practice time ends suffices for showering and changing clothes. You can use the lot by the pool for pick-up and drop-off only. If you wish to park and come on deck, you will need a parking permit. Parking permits are required in all lots at Ohlone College. Parking permits may be purchased these ways: Daily - using the machines located through the parking lots; quarterly through the Ohlone College bookstore.
7. Remember that USA Swimming, MSJA and Ohlone College, does not allow Smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages in and around the pool area.
8. Anyone wanting to watch practice must do so from the stands. Swimmer's safety is the most important consideration. Parents who stand on deck block the view of our coaches and could be a safety hazard.
  - The USA Swimming Insurance Coverage for clubs state: "Anyone on deck during a swim team practice must be a certified USA Swimming Coach or USA Swimming registered athlete members assisting a coach. The coach must maintain direct line of sight and supervision AT ALL TIMES". For this safety and insurance reasons, parents are welcome to watch practice in the stands only.

**The parent is one of the most influential factors in the life of a competitive swimmer. Allow your child the fun of being a youngster. Keep in mind that the coach is dedicated to the improvement of the whole team at the proper rate. In turn, the coach wants the best for each and every swimmer. Praise your child and let them know that you are proud of their efforts. Be the strengthening and steadying force in your child's life. Love and support them unconditionally.**

## MSJA PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED...

### FAMILY TEAM SUPPORT / MSJA VOLUNTEER POLICY

*“Dedicated to providing swimmers of all abilities the opportunity to be the best they can be” is only possible with the dedicated efforts of all MSJA parents. Your child is swimming with one of the best teams in the nation, and your support and involvement is vital to the success of our team. The minimal obligations of all MSJA Families include the following:*

**All MSJA Families have a volunteer commitment of a minimum of 15 hours per season.**

We have a healthy group of athletes who have learned to work hard, support each other, and have fun. The success of this team is due to the combined efforts of the swimmers, the coaches, **and the parents.**

Our Family Team Support Program (MSJA Volunteer Policy) is based on a 15 hour requirement for 12 months, beginning in September, and concluding in August. We will pro-rate work commitments for those families who join/leave the program later in the year. If you fail to satisfy the fifteen hour requirement, you will be billed \$20 per un-worked hour.

It is each family's responsibility to sign up for volunteer positions on line, through our website. A coordinator will verify that you have completed that job and your volunteer account will be credited. You will always have access to your volunteer hours account.

Volunteer jobs include things like: Group Moms and Dads, Timing at swim meets, chaperoning team trips and away meets, working at socials and fundraisers, volunteer coordinators (parents who verify that the positions were filled), training to become an official, officiating at swim meets, office help, and many other tasks.

**Most of these functions are rewarding in their own right, but participation in them shows your swimmers that you are interested and involved in their sport. There are many ways to get involved. The rewards are meeting new people, making new friends and having the great feeling that you have helped make a difference.**

Thank you for your support. Your cooperation is needed and appreciated and your swimmers will benefit from your energetic participation with this program. We look forward to working together. We encourage you to get involved and meet all the wonderful people who support MSJA.

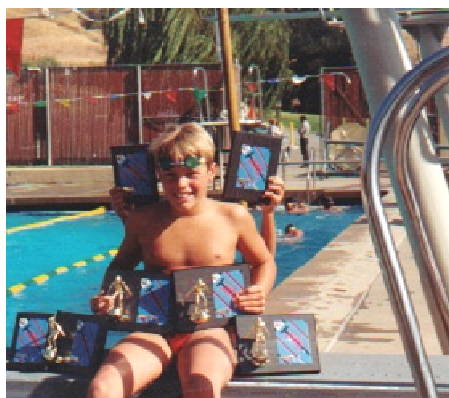
#### **Additional Information:**

- An adult other than the parent may satisfy volunteer obligations, as long as the substitute can competently perform the volunteer task.
- Families who have just one swimmer on our team, and that swimmer is in their last year of high school, have a commitment of 10 hours of team service.
- Community Service certificates are available for anyone who volunteers and needs to earn community service hours.
- The intent of this policy is not to raise money, but to emphasize how very important it is that we all work together to maintain the high standards MSJA exemplifies and to help more evenly share the volunteer effort required to provide well run meets and activities for our children. MSJA cannot run a meet without adequate parent support.

## COMMUNICATION!!!

- Check your Email often for announcements
- Check schedules often at [www.swimmsja.net](http://www.swimmsja.net). Click the Schedules tab > Team Planner, Meet Schedule, Group Calendars...
- Join the MSJA Parent Forum The parent forum is a communication tool that helps us build a place/community for Q&A and sharing ideas. Also, it is a place where parents can coordinate activities around meets, who gets there early, how many tents do we need to take, etc.... Join the MSJA Parent Forum by going to the link: <http://msjaaquatics.ning.com>
- Visit our website often [www.swimmsja.net](http://www.swimmsja.net)
- Email/call coaches
- DOWNLOAD MORE HELPFUL DOCUMENTS FROM OUR WEBSITE
  - MSJA TEAM HANDBOOK
  - MSJA TEAM APPAREL AND ORDER FORM
  - MSJA TEAM EQUIPMENT ORDER FORM

## MSJA...WE HELP BUILD LIVES



Chris Coble.... age 10 and High School Graduation



Now, at age 30, Chris Coble is back in the pool with MSJA. So what is next for Chris?

The 2010 focus is the Ironman World Championships in Kona Hawaii this October. Look for Chris representing MSJA triathlons around the world and at 2012 Olympic Trials!

Chris is also joining our year round staff coaching the Age-Group 2 (Late Group) starting September, 2010.

When Little Clara Ho joined MSJA, she would take 2 strokes and grab the wall, but she could dolphin kick all the way across. One of MSJA's most decorated swimmers, Clara is a national record holder, 4-Time NCS Champion, and 4 Year finalist for Texas A & M..... Pictured here at age 15, giving a television interview, after qualifying for Olympic Trials in Butterfly.

We help swimmers gain confidence and believe!



Clara Ho took lessons with coach Debbie, then joined USA Swimming, where she trained with Debbie from the time she was 6 years old. She followed Debbie, as Debbie moved from an 8-un coach, to an Elite Group Coach, to Senior Coach.



Television Interview!



Dory & Caroline Isaacs and Coaches

After moving from another team, the Isaacs girls made a fresh start with MSJA and Succeeded! Now they are both swimming and thriving in college